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Housekeepers' Chat

Wednesday, January 30, 1929.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Why Use a Thermometer?" Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins Available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes," "Aunt Sammy's Radio Record," and "Cooking Beef According to the Cut."

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If you are the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, you needn't listen to this talk on thermomethers. For, if you are the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, no doubt you have a reliable sixth or seventh sense, which tells you when candy is cooked to the "soft ball stage," or the "hard crack" stage. You may be able to tell, by intuition, when sirup is ready to "spin a thread." Maybe you know when an oven is "moderate," "slow," or "quick," without using a thermometer.

But we ordinary homekeepers must depend on thermometers, if we want to secure the best results in cookery. The authors of modern cookbooks take it for granted that we have thermometers in our kitchens; no longer do cookbooks tell us to "bake in a moderate over;" they say "bake at 300 degrees Fahrenheit," or "fry at 350 degrees Fahrenheit," or "boil sugar sirup to 238 degrees."

Whether you are making candy, frying in deep fat, roasting meat, or baking cake, the modern recipe will state the best temperatures for the cooking process. Special household thermometers are made for each of these uses. Or some thermometers can be used for a number of purposes, if they register from 32 to 550 degrees Fahrenheit. Many household thermometers are shielded in metal to make them sturdy.

A thermometer is a great help when it comes to roasting meats accurately. As described in the leaflet "Cooking Beef According to the Cut," a roast meat thermometer, kept in the center of the roast during cooking, removes the guesswork, and makes it possible to get the exact stage desired. If you have a copy of this leaflet, "Cooking Beef According to the Cut," you know that beef is rare between the temperatures of 130 and 150 degrees F., medium between 150 and 170 degrees F., and well done at about 180 degrees F., registered by the thermometer in the meat. By preventing overcooking, you have not only better but more meat to serve, because you have stopped undue loss from shrinkage.

Another process in which a thermometer is important is sugar cookery-- that is, making candy, icings, sirups for canning, and so forth. It's much safer to use a thermometer, which can be dipped directly into the hot sirup, than to guess at the thread-spinning or hard-crack stage.

A thermometer may also be used in making yeast breads. You can then keep the dough at the right temperature for rising. In pasteurizing milk at home, a thermometer is indispensable.

Thermometers which tell the temperature of the oven, should always be set in exactly the same spot in an oven. On a shelf, about 4 to 6 inches from the oven door, is generally the best place.

In frying croquettes or other foods in deep fat, it is much easier and more accurate to get the right temperature with a thermometer, than to count the seconds for a cube of bread to brown.

There's another important use for a thermometer -- and that is in connection with keeping foods cold. Only by means of a thermometer can you tell whether your refrigerator is maintaining a fairly steady temperature. The thermometer shows beyond question where the coldest part of the ice box is, and in homes where ice is not always used, helps to locate some part of the cellar where foods can be best stored.

Questions and answers are next on our program. After the question, the menu, which is a little out of the ordinary.

Question: "Is there any good way to clean floor mops, and dust cloths, which are too valuable to throw away?"

Mops may be washed in hot suds and rinsed in clear, hot water; they should be quickly dried. Dry mops may be oiled, or oiled ones renewed; by pouring a few drops of any good floor oil into an oil dish, or a tin box, and by setting the mop in this for a day or two; or the mop may be sprinkled with a little oil, and allowed to stand until the oil spreads through the strings.

Dust cloths should be washed frequently, both because a <u>little</u> dirt comes out more easily, and because dirty ones often leave as much dirt as they take up, and may scratch highly polished surfaces.

The heavy woolen cloths used in polishing floors may be soaked for an hour or more in hot water and soda, using 3 tablespoons of soda, or half a cup "liquid" soda to a gallon of water. Stir the cloths occasionally with a stick; They should be washed in hot soapsuds, and finally rinsed in hot water. A little kerosene, or light lubricating oil, added to this last water will soften the cloths.

Do you know the proper way to oil a dustcloth? Apply <u>a few drops</u> (a <u>very</u> few drops) of kerosene, or light lubricating oil on one corner of the cloth, roll it up, and let it stand until the oil has spread evenly. Perhaps I should mention feather dusters, even though I can say nothing good about them. Feather dusters should not be used, except perhaps just before sweeping, because they <u>scatter</u>, but do not <u>remove</u> dirt.

Second question: "Last month you broadcast a recipe for Sausage, Cabbage, and Apples, cooked together in a casserole. I understood you to say <u>dry</u> the sausage. Do you mean <u>dry</u> or <u>fry</u>?"

Answer: I meant <u>fry</u>, most assuredly, f-r-y, fry. Perhaps I'd better repeat this recipe, because it's a good one, for this time of year, and easy to prepare. There are five ingredients in this combination of Sausage, Cabbage and Apples, en casserole:

1 pound sausage meat
1 quart shredded cabbage
4 tart apples, sliced
1 tablespoon taragon vinegar, and
1/2 teaspoon salt

Five ingredients: (Repeat)

Make the sausage into flat cakes and fry until crisp on both sides. Put a layer of the shredded raw cabbage into a lightly greased baking dish, and add a layer of sliced apples, another of cabbage, and so on. Continue until all the cabbage and apples are used. Salt each layer as it is put in, and have apples as the top layer. Lay the cakes of fried sausage over the top. Wash out the sausage pan with the vinegar and pour over the contents of the baking dish. Cover and cook until the cabbage and apples are tender. Serve from the dish in which cooked.

After writing that recipe, you won't want to take another long one. So we'll make our menu short and snappy. Has anyone a suggestion? I'll tell you what I had the other day for supper -- hot roast beef sandwiches. They're nice, for a change. To make the sandwiches, toast slices of bread on one side, and spread the toasted side with butter. Make into sandwiches, with slices of cold roast beef, placing the toasted side next to the meat. Toast the outside of each sandwich, place on hot plates, pour on hot gravy, and garnish with a sprig of parsley, and a pickle.

With this sandwich I served Harvard Beets, cooked according to the recipe in the radio cookbook, and Asparagus Salad. My dessert was apple pie, with melted cheese. Ever serve apple pie, with melted cheese? After the pie is baked, lay thin slices of cheese over the top. Then put in a very moderate oven, until the cheese is melted. Serve at once, while the cheese is warm. Either a freshly baked or a cold pie may be prepared in this way.

Did everybody get this supper menu? Hot Roast Beef Sandwich; Harvard Beets; Asparagus Salad; and Apple Pie with Melted Cheese.

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Tomorrow I shall give you some special breakfast suggestions.

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